

**COMMISSION ON AGING
MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES
February 23, 2017**

Members Present	Members Absent
John Honig	Noelle Heyman
Mary Petrizzo	Amoke Alakoye
Revathi Vikram	Stephanie Edelstein
Syed Yusuf	Noureen Chochan
Jerry Morenoff	
Isabelle Schoenfeld	
Richard Jourdenais	COA Alumni
Judith Peres	Charles Kauffman
Morton Faller	
Hileia Seeger	Liaisons
Karen Maricheau	Austin Heyman, Office of Community Partnerships
Bonnie Klem	James Campbell, Commission on Veterans Affairs
Monica Schaeffer	Phil Smakula, Department of Recreation
David Denton	Leslie Marks, Senior Fellow-DHCA
	Alan Kaplan, Commission on Health
	Faisal Khan, Department of Transportation
	Charles Kauffman, COA Alumni
	Marcia Pruzan, Senior Fellow-Age Friendly Montgomery
	Guests
	Robin Henoeh, Grows
	Sara Lovinger
	Dennis Shaw
	Mawal Sidi, American University student
	Staff
	Odile Brunetto, Department of Health and Human Services
	Tremayne Jones Department of Health and Human Services
	Marcia Pruzan, Department of Health and Human Services

Call to order–1st Vice-Chair, Isabelle Schoenfeld called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

Welcome and Introductions–Isabelle welcomed all attendees. Staff and guest introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes–January minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer’s Report–Treasurer Revathi Vikram reported that the COA account has a balance of \$6,380.18.

Affordable Senior Housing– Leslie Marks addressed the COA about the work of the Department of Housing & Community Affairs (DHCA). The mission of the DHCA is to plan and implement activities which prevent and correct problems that contribute to the physical decline of residential and commercial areas; maintain a marketplace which is fair to both landlords and tenants; increase the supply of new affordable housing; maintain existing housing in a safe condition, and support community programs that benefit the residents of Montgomery County. The Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) is tasked with producing new housing, preserving existing housing and providing subsidies. DHCA partners with HHS and HOC to provide a variety of rental assistance programs including those aimed at very-low income residents (below 30%), rapid rehousing programs and programs aimed at medically vulnerable populations. DHCA affordable housing goals and performance goals are to:

- Establish goals for adding to the affordable housing stock; promote mixed-used; mixed-income and senior housing development.
- Preserve existing affordable housing through aggressive code enforcements and effective utilization of funding sources.
- Leverage no-cost housing approaches such as MPDU development and No-Cost Rental Agreements.
- Reduce low-income residents utility bills by providing energy efficient improvements through Weatherization Programs.
- Continue the focus on, and coordination of housing for those with special needs through Housing First, rental assistance and eviction prevention programs.
- Support affordable homeownership opportunities.

DHCA receives federal grants (HOME and CDBG Program) as well as various state weatherization grants to help residents. There are other affordable housing tools such as:

- Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs)- provides real property tax abatements for housing projects. Countywide PILOT limits are established annually by the County Council for a 10-year period.
- Right of First Refusal- allows certain groups to match residential contracts to preserve affordable housing. Chapter 53A of the Montgomery County Code provides DHCA, HOC and the Tenant groups, with a unique tool to preserve affordable housing, the Right of First Refusal, which allows these groups to match any signed contract for the sale of multifamily properties containing four or more units. Utilizing this tool, 8 properties containing 1,244 units have been purchased by DHCA and HOC to preserve and/or create affordable housing in the County.
- Rental Agreements-no cost agreements which preserve affordable housing for a specific period term which is generally 5-10 years.
- Moderate Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs)- program that promotes affordable housing to low-income residents (general at or below 65-70%) by requiring developers to provide affordable housing in new developments that meet certain thresholds.
- Workforce Housing- similar to the MPDU program, this program promotes affordable housing, but to residents with higher incomes (at or below 120%). Workforce Housing increases the availability of housing in the County for public employees and other workers whose income

cannot support the high cost of housing that is located close to their workplace and who, as a result, are increasingly priced out of housing opportunities.

The challenge to the County Council and the County Executive is to insure the continues growth of the Housing Initiative Fund and to provide local resources to address the neighborhoods around Montgomery County that need some assistance to ensure they are sound and viable.

Age Friendly Montgomery County- The priorities that Housing suggested were to:

- Expand the supply of affordable housing in Montgomery County.
- Promote affordable wrap around services; the two biggest issues among seniors are falls and medication management.

Area Agency on Aging Report—AAA Director Dr. Odile Brunetto provided several updates:

- On March 14th the County Executive will release his budget for FY18.
- Office of Management Budget will hold their senior cluster meeting next week.
- MNCPPC is doing a survey and would like the COA input on the open spaces and buildings the link was emailed to all commissioners and alumni members.
- The new Potomac Recreational Community Center will begin a senior lunch program in April.
- County staff are hearing concerns about immigration and deportation issues from seniors and those in the community, HHS Director and other County leaders are planning a meeting to discuss these concerns.
- Reminder that there is now a monthly newsletter for caregivers you can sign up on the County website.
- Meals on Wheels webpage is in the process of being launched it will be partnered with County Stat where you can enter your zipcode and it will give you the closest Meals on Wheels location.
- There was a meeting with County Council President Berliner and representatives of County staff on the discussion of Elder Abuse. The Red Flags of Abuse are Neglect, Financial Abuse/Exploitation, business advocates in the center of private and agency homecare personnel.

Commission Business—

- COA March meeting will take place on March 23rd at 12pm at North Potomac Community Center.
- New Commissioners Orientation will take place in March.

COA March meeting will take place at North Potomac Community Recreation Center from 9am-12pm.

COA Stakeholder Forum

The Stakeholder Forum will take place on March 29th, 9-12:30pm. The forum will be held at the Silver Spring Civic Building. There will be a panel discussion with Age Friendly Work Group chairs for Communications, Transportation, Home and Community Based Services, and Housing. There will also be breakout sessions on these topics. The breakout session will take a “speed dating” format where folks will move from one breakout session to another, participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and identify gaps and there will be a survey that the participants can fill out at the end of the forum.

COA Committee Reports

Aging in Place/Community and Planning Committee (AIP/C&P)

Mary Petrizzo and Bonnie Klem reported that guest speaker Clarence Snuggs, Director, Montgomery County Department and Housing and Community Affairs provided the committee with an overview of the County efforts to provide affordable senior housing. To date, the County has invested \$800 million dollars in affordable housing through partnerships, both non-governmental and state and federal funding opportunities. The senior population (age 65+) in the County is growing rapidly, approximately 20% in the last 5 years, and housing affordability is an increased burden for seniors in both the rental and homeowner sectors. Action in Montgomery (AIM) has advocated the use of the Housing Initiative Fund from transfer taxes to pay for affordable housing.

Health Planning, Services and Community Supports Committee (HPSCS)

Dave Denton reported the topic of discussion was the Age Friendly Montgomery: Senior Agenda Objectives. The discussion points were Support and alignment from COA and Committees. FY18 COA ranking priorities included:

- Additional APS and Public Guardian Staff
- Funding for additional small group homes with escorted transportation subsidies
- Senior Plus resources–Recreation Department

The committee continues to focus on Healthcare, Dementia, Senior Care Plus, End of Life, Nexus Montgomery and the WISH program.

Public Policy Committee (PPC)

John Honig reported the Public Policy Committee discussed both state and county legislative activity.

State Legislative Activity three letters were sent in support of the following bills.

- HB 147 “Health Aging Program” asking that dental services be included if the program is funded.
- HB 387 “Assisted Living Program Transparency Act”
- HB 256 “Adult Protective Services–Investigation–Time Period Increase.”

County Budget and Legislative Activity

The County’s Executive Operating Budget will be released by March 15th. The bill of interest pending at the Council is the Senior Homeowner Property Tax Relief Bill (42-16).

Liaisons

Commission on Veterans Affairs- James Campbell addressed the COA on Identify all the World War 2 (WW2) veterans and their widows to be recognized. At Aspenwood there are five WW2 veterans at their facility, identified two widows at Aspenwood.

COA Alumni (COAA)- COA Alumni Charles Kauffman updated the COA on the events that are taking place with the COAA. Guest speaker Dan Hibbert from Ride-On attended the COAA meeting to present a comprehensive description of Montgomery County transportation system. Mr. Hibbert reviewed the provision of the County’s multiple services stating that those that impact the senior population as well as the support provided by the COA over the years. He explained the challenges of serving the needs of an aging population efficiently at a reasonable cost.

Senior Fellow-Office of Community Partnerships–Austin Heyman reported on upcoming events. Austin noted the contribution that InterAges continues to make especially with the inclusion of immigration children in MCPS .

Senior Fellow-Age Friendly Montgomery–Marcia Pruzan reported that she has begun working with the ten Age Friendly workgroups.

Department of Transportation- Faisal Khan addressed the COA about the transit coming to Montgomery County which will open on Route 29. Department of Transportation will hold open house to give information to the public how they can benefit to the transit system.

Department of Recreation- Phil Smakula addressed the COA about the FY18 budget process the lunch program will launch in April at the new Potomac center. The Bone Builders Program at North Potomac is growing. Phil stated that for individuals that are blind there will be at least four instructors with the group to provide services. At Holiday Park Senior Center and at Schweinhaut Senior Center there will be services for both medication management and dental programs.

Other topics of discussion

Dennis Shaw addressed the COA on Easter Village Cohousing, which was developed by Eco Housing Corporation. It is an award-winning green “urban garden” cohousing community. Easter

Village cohousing is located in the South Point neighborhood of the Downtown Silver Springs Arts and Entertainment District. Easter Village was one of the first residential buildings in the world to earn a LEED rating from the U.S. Green Building (USGBC). USGBC gave Eastern Village a certified LEED Silver rating in September 2005 for environmental performance. Cohousing is a type of intentional, collaborative housing in which residents actively participate in the design and operation of their community. The building's physical design encourages both individual space and social contact. Private homes contain all the features of conventional homes, but residents also have access to extensive common facilities such as a courtyard, playroom, and a common house.

David Richman from NARFE (National Active Retired Federal Employees) mentioned that there are 28 chapters in the state of Maryland and the concern is that the retirees and future retirees needs does not meet the income to remain in Maryland, they are striving to get income tax for those aged 65 and over.

Robin Henoch from GROWS was in attendance to explore how Grows and COA can collaborate.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.